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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Bo-In Lin

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EXAMINER

ALVAREZ, RAQUEL

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3688

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DELIVERY MODE

02/05/2010

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/851,793	Applicant(s) LIN, BO-IN	
	Examiner Raquel Alvarez	Art Unit 3688	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 January 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to communication filed on 1/19/2010.
2. Claims 1-26 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomson et al. (US 2003/0061104, hereinafter Thomson) in view of article by Sally Trelford titled, "Choice rewards", hereinafter Trelford.

With respect to claims 1, 8, 15, 16, 23, 24-25, Thomson teaches a network system connected with an Online service provider (GSP) selling goods-or services to an Online customer through the network system (Figure 13). A networked server managed by an after-sales-service and customer care (ASCC) center connected through said network system to a customer's computer having an ASSC server for allowing said customer to select and receive an electronic ASCC voucher defining an ASCC program and representing a value corresponding to a selection and purchase of said ASCC program made by said customer related to sales of said goods-or-services wherein said electronic ASCC vouchers are provided for transmitting over said network defining said ASCC program to said customer to control and transmit said electronic voucher for

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paying for said ASCC program by using said value represented by said ASCC voucher (i.e. the user logs onto the warranty administrator's web site to purchase the warranty of the product purchased, the conditions and terms of the warranty are transmitted to the customer electronically) [0053 0054 0055 0057 0102 0109].

With respect to the after-sales service and customer care provider selected by said customer. Thompson on paragraph 0081 teaches the customer purchasing an after-sales services such as a warranty. Thompson doesn't specifically teach independent service providers selectable by the user. Trefold teaches individual receiving performance vouchers which allows the individuals to choose their own reward and allowing the individuals to select the service provider in which to redeem the services (see pages 2-3). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to have included in the after sales services of Thomson the teachings of Trefold for allowing the customer to select the care provider of their choice in order to provide **versatility** (in Trefold, page 3, 4th paragraph).

With respect to claims 2, 9, 17, the combination of Thomson and Trefold teach receiving an electronic voucher for making payment to a care service provider, Trefold teaches receiving performance vouchers which allows the individuals to choose their own reward and allowing the individuals to select the service provider in which to redeem the services (see pages 2-3). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to have included the teachings of Trefold of allowing the customer to transmit the performance voucher (electronic

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voucher) as payments or rewards for the service received in order to compensate the service providers of their choice. With respect to providing the vouchers over the network as a computer file. Official Notice is taken that it is old and well known to provide data as computer file over the network in order to provide convenience. It would have been obvious in the combination of Thompson and Trefold to have included providing the vouchers as a computer file over the network in order to provide convenience in managing and transmitting the performance vouchers.

With respect to claims 4-5, 11-12, Thomson further teaches transmitting said ASCC voucher from said Online customer and providing direct contact between the online customer and ASCC provider to enable to arrange for said ASCC program [0102 0109].

With respect to claims 6, 13, 18, 19, Thomson further teaches an after-sales service and customer care (ASCC) center further includes an ASCC database for keeping a record related to and defined by said ASCC program [0055].

With respect to claims 7, 14, Thomson further teaches organizing ASCC database according to said online GSP, said online customer and said ASCC provider [0085 0086].

With respect to claims 20, the limitations were previously addressed above in the rejection to claims 4-5, 11-12, and therefore rejected under similar rationale.

With respect to claims 21, Thomson further teaches an after-sales service and customer care (ASCC) center for issuing said electronic ASCC voucher and for coordinating, tracking, and carrying an insurance policy for said ASCC program [0062 0090].

Claims 3, 10, further recite the after-sales service customer care (ASCC) center providing an incentive voucher for enabling said customer to reward said ASCC provider according to a customer satisfaction assessment by said customer. Thomson teaches that the warranty administrator issues satisfaction surveys to the customer in which the customer can rate the service received [0081]. Thomson does not specifically disclose using the incentive voucher/ satisfaction assessment as a form of rewarding the service provider for the service received. Trelfold on the other hand, teaches issuing retail vouchers for individual performance (page 2). It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to have included in the system of Thomson the teachings of Trelfold of using the incentive vouchers/satisfaction assessment as a form of rewarding the service provider for the service provided because such a modification would motivate the service providers to increase productivity and quality.

With respect to claims 22 and 26, Thomson teaches a network system connected with an Online service provider (GSP) selling goods-or services to an Online customer through the network system (Figure 13). An after-sales-service and customer care (ASCC) center for issuing an electronic ASCC voucher defining an ASCC program related to sales of said goods-or-services wherein said electronic ASCC vouchers are provided for transmitting over said network to said customer to control and transmit said electronic voucher for paying for said ASCC program by using said value represented by said ASCC voucher (i.e. the user logs onto the warranty administrator's web site to purchase the warranty of the product purchased, the conditions and terms of the warranty are transmitted to the customer electronically) [0053 0054 0055 0057 0102 0109]; a plurality of after-sales-service customer care (ASCC) providers connected to said network [0080]; transmitting said ASCC voucher from said Online customer and providing direct contact between the online customer and ASCC provider to enable to arrange for said ASCC program [0102 0109].

With respect to the after-sales service customer care (ASCC) center providing an incentive voucher for enabling said customer to reward said ASCC provider according to a customer satisfaction assessment by said customer. Thomson teaches that the warranty administrator issues satisfaction surveys to the customer in which the customer can rate the service received [0081]. Thomson does not specifically disclose using the incentive voucher/ satisfaction assessment as a form of rewarding the service provider for the service received. Trelfold on the other hand, teaches issuing retail vouchers for individual performance (page 2). It would have been obvious for a person

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of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to have included in the system of Thomson the teachings of Trefold of using the incentive vouchers/satisfaction assessment as a form of rewarding the service provider for the service provided because such a modification would motivate the service providers to increase productivity and quality.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant argues that the claims would not be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to include the after sales services of Thompson the teachings of Trefold for allowing the customer to select the care provider of their choice in order to provide versatility and that a person of ordinary skill in the art in the current invention and Thompson has different perspectives and thought process in dealing with customer care issues than the person of ordinary skill in the art of Trefold in attempting to motivate the employees. The Examiner wants to point out that Trefold teaches was cited to teach in general allowing a person to make choices by allowing to redeem their performance vouchers which allows the individuals to choose their own reward and allowing the individuals to select the service provider in which to redeem the services (see pages 2-3). Nothing in this general practice of allowing the customer/employees/users to use their vouchers at the service provider of their choice prohibits or exclude the teachings to be used in the after sale and customer care of Thompson in order to provide versatility and choices to the users.

5. Applicant argues that in Thompson the customer doesn't have much control because the customer does not control anything of value that can be used as payment

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or reward. Applicant wants to point out that the claims were rejected under 103 by Thompson in view of article by Sally Trelford titled, "Choice rewards", hereinafter Trelford and therefore the claims should be argue accordingly. Trefold teaches individual receiving performance vouchers which allows the individuals to choose their own reward and **allowing the individuals to select the service provider in which to redeem the services** (see pages 2-3). The combination of Thompson and Trefold teaches allowing the customers to select the care provider of their choice in order to provide versatility (in Trefold, page 3, 4th paragraph).

6. Applicant argues that Thomson doesn't teach receiving an electronic voucher defining an ASCC program and representing a value corresponding to a selection and purchase of said ASCC program that it is transmitted over the network as a computer file. The Examiner disagrees with Applicant because the combination of Thompson and Trefold teach the customers receiving performances vouchers that they can transmit to the service providers of their choice as payment or rewards for service, see Trefold pages 2-3. The performance vouchers having value because it represents a compensation for services rendered. As far as the vouchers being transmitted over the network as a computer file. Official Notice is taken that it is old and well known to provide data as computer file over the network in order to provide convenience. It would have been obvious in the combination of Thompson and Trefold to have included providing the vouchers as a computer file over the network in order to provide convenience in managing and transmitting the performance vouchers.

7. Applicant argues that Thompson doesn't teach an electronic voucher that is transmitted over the network and allows the customer to transmit for making payment to a service provider. The Examiner disagrees with Applicant because the claims as amended is taught by Trefold which teaches receiving performance vouchers which allows the individuals to transmit the performance voucher (electronic voucher) to the service provider of their choice as payment/reward for the service performed(see pages 2-3). With respect to the vouchers being transmitted electronically, Trefold is silent as to the method of transmission of the vouchers to the service providers but Official Notice is taken that it is old and well known to provide data as computer file over the network in order to provide convenience and rapidness.

Point of contact

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raquel Alvarez whose telephone number is (571)272-6715. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert A. Weinhardt can be reached on (571)272-6633. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Raquel Alvarez/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3688

Raquel Alvarez
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3688

R.A.
2/2/2010